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The New Wing

Postponement of Opening

OWING to delays in the shipment of materials caused by the European War, it has become necessary to postpone the opening of the Robert Dawson Evans Galleries for Paintings until January.

A Statuette of Herakles

THE statuette illustrated on the opposite page has recently been purchased by the Museum from the income of the Francis Bartlett Fund. It is of white marble, a little under two feet high, and represents Herakles standing with bowed head, his right hand resting on the end of his club; the lion's skin hangs over his left arm, and the hand, which is missing, held a bow. Except for the loss of this hand and of a part of the moulded base, the preservation is practically perfect. The discolored incrustation which covered most of the surface has been skillfully removed from the front of the body, but has been allowed to remain at the back.

The hero stands erect in the simple, almost rigid pose of the athletic statues of the early fifth century; his weight is borne more on the left leg than on the right, but both feet are planted firmly on the ground. The body, though of a powerful, athletic build, is not heavy; only in the treatment of the neck and the shoulder muscles is there a trace of exaggeration. There is a slight but distinct suggestion of weariness in the droop of the head. At first glance there is nothing to connect the statuette with such a work as the Farnese Herakles in Naples, with its immense bulk, over-developed muscles, and small head. And yet the elements of the later conception are all present, though treated with the simplicity and restraint of the best period of Greek art. The statuette is thus to be placed at the head of a long line of representations of the tired Herakles resting from his labors; the Farnese statue belongs at the other end of the series.

The work is a Roman copy executed in the second century A.D., perhaps in the reign of the Emperor Hadrian. This is shown by such technical details as the twisted support which connects the club with the thigh, the profile of the base, and the marks of the drill in the hair and beard; but it is distinguished from the great mass of Roman copies by a delicacy and precision of workmanship which is quite unexpected in a work of marble on such a small scale. The details of the torso are carefully modelled; veins are indicated on the abdomen, arms, and feet; the features are sharply defined; the ears have the swollen cartilage characteristic of boxers; the curls of the hair and beard are carved with the utmost elaboration. This latter feature, as well as the rather hard execution of the surface, shows that the original was, like most of the statues of its period, of bronze.

Most Græco-Roman statuettes are reduced

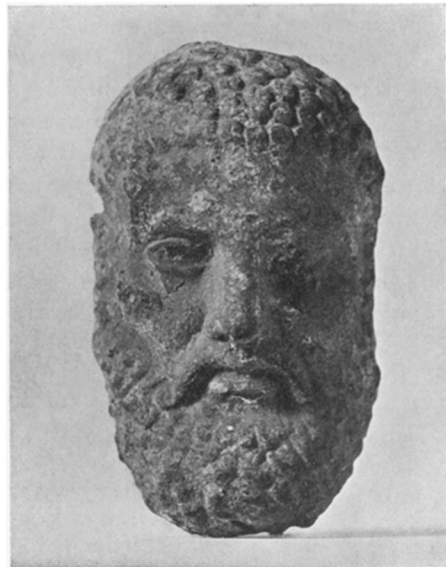
copies of life-size statues, reproducing only the general features of the original, and of little value for determining its style. The Herakles is plainly in a different category. Its prototype enjoyed considerable fame in antiquity, judging by the number of existing reproductions; but it is noticeable that these are all on gems, coins, and other examples of the minor arts, whereas no life-size copies are known. A terra-cotta head from Smyrna, illustrated at the end of this article, is a close replica and on the same scale. It is therefore probable that the original was also a statuette and that the copyist, having direct access to it or to a cast of it, was able to produce an unusually accurate and reliable replica.

The original, being of bronze, did not require the support of the tree-trunk; the figure was perfectly balanced, not as now inclined slightly to the left, and the lion's skin hung free. The object at the right of the stump, which bears some resemblance to running water, is also an addition of the copyist and suggests that the statuette was set up in a sanctuary where Herakles was worshipped as the protector of a warm medicinal spring.

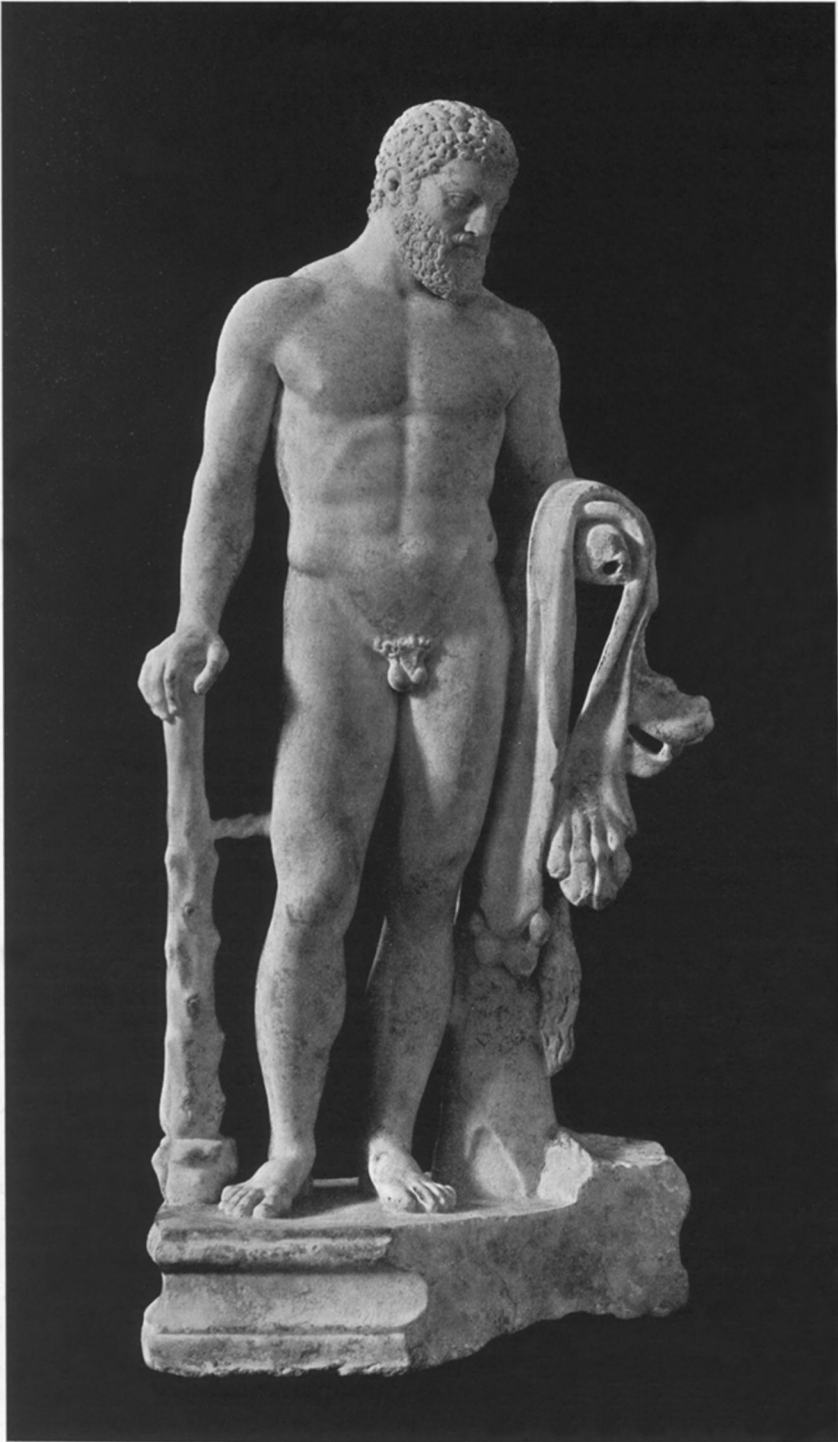
The attitude of the figure, the style of the modelling of the torso, the slightly archaic type of the face, and the schematic treatment of the hair are evidence that the original is to be assigned to the second quarter of the fifth century, perhaps to the sculptor Myron, who was an older contemporary of Pheidias and Polykleitos.

The statuette has long been known to archaeologists; it was shown in 1903 at the Exhibition of the Burlington Fine Arts Club and described in the Catalogue (page 13, No. 12). It has also been illustrated and discussed in Brunn-Bruckmann's "*Denkmäler Griechischer Skulptur*," plates 569, 570.

L. D. C.



*Terra Cotta Head of Herakles
Greek Hellenistic Period*



Marble Statuette of Herakles
Roman copy of a Greek bronze of the Fifth Century B.C.

Purchased from the Francis Bartlett Fund, 1914